

STARS AND STRIPES

Wednesday, May 21, 2003

A news digest for U.S. forces serving overseas

Virginia welcomes home thousands of sailors

BY SONJA BARISIC
The Associated Press

NORFOLK, Va. — A star-spangled billboard near Norfolk Naval Station reads "Welcome Home to Norfolk."

Down the street, the sign in front of Nick's restaurant announces "Welcome Home US Troops," just above "Fri. and Sat. Karaoke."

And American flags are popping up on homes and businesses as the region prepares to welcome about 16,000 sailors and 16 ships — including two aircraft carriers — home from the Iraq war this week and next.

Several more ships with about 10,000 additional service members are to return by the end of June.

"The last time anything of this magnitude occurred was in the first Gulf War crisis" in 1991, Norfolk Mayor Paul D. Fraim said Wednesday of the large number of sailors coming back. At the height of recent operations, about 35,000 sailors and Marines were deployed from the East Coast, according to the Navy.

While thousands of family members and invited guests are expected to pack the piers to greet the returning warriors, there will be no big speeches or parades.

That's OK with military spouses like Wendy Harshman of Norfolk.

She's just looking forward to being reunited with her husband, Steve, an avionics technician, when the aircraft carrier USS Theodore Roosevelt returns next week after a five-month deployment.

"We can't wait for him to get home," Harshman said as she headed into the commissary at the Navy base to buy groceries, her 2½-year-old son, Tanner, squirming at her side. "And I know my husband. He'll just want to get home quickly."

Other sailors will get to come home first, though.

Five squadrons and 40 aircraft from Carrier Air Wing Three were to return to their home bases in Virginia beginning Wednesday, following their nearly six-month deployment aboard the carrier USS Harry S. Truman. The air wing flew combat missions over Iraq from the eastern Mediterranean and dropped 700 tons of precision-guided ordnance against enemy targets.

Two C-2A Greyhound transport planes and about 50 people were to return Wednesday to Norfolk Naval Station.

Twenty people aboard four E-2C Hawkeye radar planes will fly to Norfolk on Thursday. Also that day, about 40 people from three fighter squadrons fly back to Oceana Naval Air Station in Virginia Beach, while four more squadrons will return to bases in Jacksonville, Fla.; Whidbey Island, Wash.; and Beaufort, S.C.

On Friday, the Truman will become the first East Coast Navy carrier to return from the war when it pulls into Norfolk Naval Station along with eight other ships. About 8,000 sailors and Marines belong to the Truman strike group's ships and squadrons.

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Top Marine says all of his forces should be out of Gulf by end of Aug.

BY ROBERT BURNS
The Associated Press

WASHINGTON — All of the more than 60,000 Marines who deployed to Kuwait and the Persian Gulf for the Iraq war probably will have returned to their home stations in the United States and elsewhere by the end of August, the top Marine said Wednesday.

Gen. Michael W. Hagee, commandant of the Marine Corps, told reporters that decisions on when to send the Marines home would be made by Army Gen. Tommy Franks, who controls all forces in the Gulf.

"We have plans to come out [of the Gulf] this summer," he said, adding that August was the target date.

Most U.S. Navy ships and many Air Force aircraft that participated in the war have already left the area. Ground forces in Iraq, however, are still struggling to restore order, capture senior members of the former Saddam Hussein regime and lay the foundation for establishing a new Iraqi government.

Hagee said that about 65,000 Marines were deployed for the war, representing 68 percent of the Marine Corps' total warfighting force. They included 80 percent of the Corps' infantry battalions, 100 percent of its tank and light armored vehicle battalions and 100 percent of its Harrier fighter squadrons. Most of the Marines attacked into

Iraq from bases in Kuwait, but there also were several Marine helicopter squadrons and five Harrier squadrons that operated from Navy ships in the Gulf.

Hagee was asked to explain an unusual episode during the latter stages of the drive toward Baghdad in which Col. Joe W. Dowdy was removed as commander of the 1st Marine Regiment, which has about 5,000 troops. Military officials confirmed Dowdy's removal at the time but did not give a reason.

"The division commander lost confidence in him," Hagee said, referring to Maj. Gen. James N. Mattis, commander of the 1st Marine Division. Asked why Mattis lost confidence, Hagee said, "You would have to ask the division commander."

It is extremely rare for a regimental commander to be relieved of duty during combat.

Once Mattis lost confidence in Dowdy, "the right thing to do — especially on the battlefield — is to find another commander," Hagee said. He did not elaborate.

Hagee also said that while he is not surprised that U.S. forces in Iraq have not found any chemical or biological weapons, he believes they eventually will be uncovered.

"We were absolutely convinced that he [Saddam] would use them" in the war, Hagee said. On the day U.S. forces entered Iraq, "the only question in my mind was when" they would be used.



MARNI MCENTEE/Stars and Stripes

Pfc. Joseph Lisciandri and other military police wait for Iraqi police to join their patrol through Baghdad.

V Corps gets tough on Iraqi crime

BY MARNI MCENTEE
Stars and Stripes

BAGHDAD, Iraq — V Corps has formed a law enforcement task force to root out criminal elements in Baghdad that Iraqi police are not yet capable of handling.

Called Task Force Vigilant Justice, the team is headed by the Mannheim, Germany-based 18th Military Police Brigade, according to Lt. Col. Eric Nikolai, the V Corps deputy provost marshal.

"It looks for targets like arms markets, drug dealers, vehicle chop shops — whatever we think is a viable target," Nikolai said Tuesday. "We'll apply whatever force is necessary."

The task force has its work cut out for it. Before the war, Iraqi leader Saddam Hussein freed about 100,000 prisoners from jail. Many believe the ex-convicts are some of the culprits involved in serious criminal activity in Baghdad, said Col. Marc Warren, V Corps staff judge advocate.

Depending on the mission, the task force may include MPs, infantry units, detectives from the Army Criminal Investigation Command, prosecutors and military intelligence experts. The task force also has drug- and bomb-sniffing dogs and unmanned aerial vehicles at its disposal.

"I call it law enforcement with an attitude," Warren said.

The task force, including the Hanau, Germany-based 709th MP Battalion, made its first raid Monday night. Fifteen suspected weapons dealers were arrested. The suspects were loaded with 30 million Iraqi dinar — about \$30,000 — in cash. Also seized were eight AK-47 rifles and some fake passports.

The Iraqi suspects were taken to a military jail near Baghdad International

airport and will face criminal hearings in the Iraqi judicial system.

Warren said the initial raid served as good training for the task force. Plus, it will show Iraqis, who remain fearful of crime in Baghdad, that the military is acting aggressively to help solve the problem, Nikolai said.

In addition to its own surveillance operations, such as satellite imagery, aerial monitoring and photography and radio intercepts, the task force hopes to use tips from citizens about criminal activity in their neighborhoods, Nikolai said.

The first raid came two days before the re-opening of one of Baghdad's largest jails, a 100-bed facility downtown. The development of a working prison system, along with efforts to re-establish a civil and criminal court system, are key steps toward law and order, Warren said.

"It's not only to go out and get bad guys off the streets," Warren said. "It also helps us build a case for their subsequent prosecution by an Iraqi justice system."

In the meantime, MPs have helped establish 14 police stations in Baghdad and are training Iraqi police through joint patrols.

"Reported crimes are on the increase," Nikolai said. "People are showing up at these police stations when bad things happen in their neighborhoods."

Eventually, Iraqi police will take over law enforcement in Baghdad from Task Force Vigilant Justice.

The team gets the first part of its name from the 18th MPs' call sign, which is Vigilant, and the last part from the V Corps staff judge advocate's goal of bringing criminals to justice, Warren said.

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Family IDs Marine killed during rescue

BEAVER DAM, Wis. — A third-generation serviceman who promised to make his father proud by following in his footsteps died after he jumped into an Iraqi canal to rescue victims of a helicopter crash, his family said.

Marine Infantry Sgt. Kirk Straseskie, 23, died Monday after he tried to rescue the crew of a Sea Knight helicopter that went down into a canal shortly after takeoff in Hillah, about 60 miles south of Baghdad. Four Marines on the helicopter were killed.

"We told him not to be a hero," said his grandmother, Jan Helmer. "But that was Kirk."

Capt. Joe Kloppel, a Marine Corps spokesman at the Pentagon, said officials had not released names of the Marines who died. The cause of the crash was under investigation, but the military said it appeared to be an accident.

Straseskie graduated from Beaver Dam High School in 1998 and immediately joined the Marines, said his father, John Straseskie, 51. He said both he and his father had served in the U.S. Army, and Kirk wanted to join the military. His son chose the Marines because he "was a fighter," he said.

"He told me he was going to match my ribbons," said John Straseskie. "He matched them and more."

Kirk was the youngest of four brothers. His older brother, Ryan, is a lieutenant in the Army National Guard's 724th Engineer Battalion, which was deployed to the Middle East region earlier this month.

Mary Schreiber, Ryan and Kirk's aunt, said no one in the family knew Ryan's location, but he had been told of his brother's death and was on his way home.

Piestewa family to meet with President

PHOENIX — The family of the only servicewoman killed during the Iraq war is expected to meet with President Bush and first lady Laura Bush in Washington on Memorial Day.

Army Pfc. Lori Piestewa's parents, Priscilla and Terry, and her two children, Brandon, 5, and Carla, 3, are among the family members expected to make the trip to the White House.

A 23-year-old Tuba City native, Piestewa is believed to be the first Native American woman killed in combat while serving in the U.S. military, and the only American female soldier killed in Operation Iraqi Freedom.

She was a member of the 507th Maintenance Company from Fort Bliss, Texas, which was ambushed March 23 near the southern Iraq riverfront city of Nasiriyah.

The family also is to take part in the unveiling of an exhibit honoring Piestewa and five other Native American women at the Women in Military Service for America Memorial at Arlington National Cemetery.

From wire reports

Return

Continued from Page 1

Next week, 5,700 sailors and Marines from the Roosevelt strike group return.

Squadrons from Carrier Air Wing Eight fly back to Norfolk, Oceana and bases in Jacksonville, Fla.; Whidbey Island, Wash.; and Ft. Worth, Texas on May 27 and 28.

The Roosevelt and three smaller ships will return to Norfolk May 29, while the oiler USNS Arctic, will return to Earle, N.J. Several other ships in the Roosevelt's strike group will return to their home ports later.

Also May 29, the three-ship USS Nassau amphibious ready group will return after deploying for more than nine months in support of the war on terrorism and the Iraq war. The ships will drop off equipment and about 2,200 Marines from the 24th Marine Expeditionary Unit, based at Camp Lejeune, N.C., in Morehead City, N.C. on Monday, then head to the Norfolk area with about 1,800 sailors aboard.

All these homecomings won't be quite as grand as the welcome sailors received after the first Persian Gulf War, when an estimated 50,000 people turned out at the Norfolk Navy base to greet eight ships, including the carrier USS John F. Kennedy and the battleship USS Wisconsin.

This time, the homecomings will be closed to the public because of increased security, but that makes them no less important, Fraim said.

"We are very much family here," said Fraim, who plans to take a helicopter out to both carriers on their return days and talk to the sailors as the ships near Norfolk. "We love all of these kids."

The fact that they have engaged in this very difficult mission for all of us and now are returning home gives us a great sense of pride and relief."

When the sailors leave the base, they will be greeted by "welcome home" billboards, banners and bumper stickers. Salutes to the military also will be included in several festivals throughout the summer.

For the fly-ins at Oceana, there will be hangar parties with banners, food and beverages, said Ira Agricola of the Hampton Roads Chamber of Commerce. Goody bags with snacks, phone cards, coupons and other donated items will be handed out to enlisted personnel who live in barracks.

Those things typically happen at homecomings after peacetime deployments as well, although more items have been donated this time, Agricola said.

"When you stop to consider it, all of these folks deserve recognition, no matter when they come back," he said.

News tracker: What's new with old news

Military

Coconut Island body: A reserve Marine whose body washed ashore on Coconut Island last week and who police said appeared to have bullet wounds, was not actually shot, investigators said Tuesday.

Despite an autopsy, officials still have not determined the cause of death of Sgt. David Xiong, 24, of Warren, Mich.

Investigators previously said Xiong appeared to have been shot two or three times, but they now say the wounds were made by marine organisms and that there was no trauma to the body. Xiong was found handcuffed, investigators said.

Xiong was a reservist activated for Operation Enduring Freedom.

Nation

Nichols bombing trial: Attorneys for Oklahoma City bombing conspirator Terry Nichols have asked for more than 1½ years to prepare their defense against state murder charges that could get him the death penalty.

A judge entered an innocent plea Tuesday on Nichols' behalf, but did not set a trial date. The defense asked that proceedings not begin until January 2005.

"Everyone is wanting to move this thing along quickly," defense attorney Brian Hermanson said. "It is going to take a significant amount of time. We have to be careful that his rights be protected."

Prosecutors said they will be ready for trial by November or December and they plan to call 217 witnesses, more than half of them from outside Oklahoma.

District Judge Steven Taylor scheduled the next hearing for May 30.

Florida tobacco verdict: A Florida appeals court on Wednesday threw out a record-setting \$145 billion verdict for thousands of Florida smokers against the tobacco industry, saying the case should not have been tried as a class-action lawsuit.

The 67-page order by the 3rd District Court of Appeals said smokers could not group themselves together in a single lawsuit against the nation's five biggest cigarette makers.

By eliminating class-action status, the three-judge appellate panel discarded the award a Miami-Dade County jury had given sick Florida smokers in 2000 following a two-year trial.

\$200B budget deficit: The government ran up a deficit of \$201.6 billion in the first seven months of the 2003 budget year, more than three times the total for the corresponding period a year earlier.

The latest figures, released Tuesday by the Treasury Department, underscored the government's worsening fiscal situation. Record deficits are forecast this year and next.

Crematory owner: The man who owned a Georgia crematory where more than 300 corpses were discovered last year died Tuesday of a heart attack.

Ray Marsh, 76, was the father of Tri-State Crematory operator Brent Marsh, who faces hundreds of criminal charges and numerous lawsuits after he allegedly took money for cremations never performed.

The elder Marsh founded the crematory and ran it until 1996, when his son took over operations. Brent Marsh, 29, allegedly stopped performing cremations in 1997.

He faces 334 felony criminal charges of theft by deception and also is charged with 64 counts of abuse of a body.

Hockey dad: Lawyers for a hockey dad in prison for fatally beating a fellow hockey parent asked a three-judge Superior Court appeals panel to reduce their client's prison sentence.

Thomas Junta, convicted of involuntary manslaughter for beating Michael Costin on July 5, 2000, at their sons' hockey practice, has served 1.3 years of a 6- to 10-year sentence. The two men fought after Junta objected to rough play during the workout.

The jury found that Junta did not intend to kill Costin, but went too far during the fight.

Public defender Bruce R. Bono argued on Tuesday that Junta's sentence was "excessive, given the facts of the case."

Mayor re-election: The mayor who set off a storm of controversy when he advised the Somali community in Lewiston, Maine, to slow its

migration to the area said he won't seek a second term.

In a statement, Lewiston Mayor Larry Raymond said he was confident he could win re-election this fall but had committed himself to serving one term when he ran for mayor. He also said he must focus on his law practice.

Last fall, he drew an angry response from many in the city of 36,000 when he wrote an open letter to area Somalis asking them to slow their migration and pass word among family and friends that Lewiston was "maxed-out financially, physically and emotionally."

Missing teens: A body recovered Monday in the water off City Island has been positively identified as one of the missing teenagers who disappeared while attempting to row to Hart Island in January, authorities said.

Through dental records, the city medical examiners office on Tuesday identified the body of Henry Badillo, 17, the fourth and last teenager who was lost after placing an emergency call that a dispatcher failed to relay to a police harbor unit, Newsday reported.

Badillo and the other boys, Max Guarino, 17; Andrew Melnikov, 16; and Charles Wertenbaker, 16, all died of hypothermia and drowning, medical examiner's office spokeswoman Ellen Borakove said. Melnikov's body was identified on Monday.

World

Fighting in Congo: A team of French military officers wrapped up its mission to assess the possibility of sending troops to troubled northeastern Congo as the death toll from more than a week of tribal fighting rose to 280 people, U.N. officials said Wednesday.

The French team, made up of army and navy officers, spent Wednesday discussing the logistics of deploying French troops with top U.N. military officials in Congo, said Hamadou Toure, spokesman for the U.N. mission in Congo.

Since arriving Tuesday, the French officers have been briefed on security in the region and have studied the local airport and other areas to identify a possible military headquarters and how to deploy and supply the troops, Toure said.

Milosevic trial: The U.N. war crimes tribunal gave prosecutors Tuesday 100 extra days to make their case against former Yugoslav President Slobodan Milosevic, likely delaying a verdict until well into 2005.

In a published decision on Milosevic, the three-judge panel hearing his case said it sought to strike balance between letting the trial drag on too long and allowing the prosecution time to call all its witnesses.

Afghanistan revenues: Afghan governors signed an agreement Tuesday with President Hamid Karzai to pay vital customs revenues to the central government.

Karzai had threatened to dissolve his government and resign if the governors did not start sending in the revenues.

India-Pakistan conflict: Pakistani Prime Minister Zafarullah Khan Jamali says he is confident that new peace efforts will put an end to his country's five-decade hostilities with India.

Jamali said he agreed with Indian Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee, who told the Indian Parliament earlier this month that he launched the peace initiative with Pakistan after seeing how the United States overruled the United Nations and attacked Iraq.

War on terrorism

Iraq peacekeeping: In a sign that NATO is overcoming divisions caused by the Iraq war, the alliance is preparing to help Poland run a peacekeeping force in one of three military zones to be set up by the U.S.-led coalition, diplomats said Tuesday.

A unanimous decision to order military experts to draft a technical support package for the Poles was expected at a meeting of the 19 NATO ambassadors Wednesday.

Australian anti-terror efforts: The U.S. Federal Bureau of Investigation and the Australian police are planning to set up a joint task force to fight terrorism, officials said Tuesday.

The announcement came as the FBI and Australia's Federal Police revealed they have been working together to trace the money that financed last year's Bali bombings which killed 202 people, mostly tourists.

From wire reports

News from around the war

Iraq barrels missing

BAGHDAD, Iraq — About 20 percent of the known radioactive materials stored at Iraq's largest nuclear facility are unaccounted for, and U.S. nuclear experts have found radioactive patches on the ground where looters dumped out barrels believed to contain hazardous materials.

However, a senior commander said the great majority of the dangerous waste at the Tuwaitha nuclear complex was still secure and was not leaking radiation.

"Eighty percent of the barrels are where they were before," said Col. Tim Madere, a U.S. specialist in unconventional weapons.

It was unclear how many barrels were missing.

The dormant Tuwaitha plant, once considered the heart of Saddam Hussein's nuclear program, has been repeatedly trashed by scavengers. It hasn't been operational for years. The Iraqis had been using it to store declared nuclear materials that were prohibited and sealed by the U.N. nuclear agency.

The complex was left unguarded for days during the war and it was impossible to know what was missing.

DOD data effort worries some

WASHINGTON — An unusual coalition of liberal and conservative advocacy groups and some senators want to keep tight congressional control on the Pentagon's planned anti-terror surveillance system despite new promises it will use only legally collected personal data.

And they scoffed at the Pentagon's decision to rename the project formerly known as Total Information Awareness. The new name will be Terrorism Information Awareness.

A Pentagon report to Congress also failed to reassure Sen. Ron Wyden, D-Ore., who wrote the ban that Congress imposed three months ago on using the system to scan databases holding information about Americans — until Congress gives specific approval.

The new name may make the project sound less like the totalitarian government in George Orwell's novel "1984," Sen. Patrick Leahy said, but the Vermont Democrat added: "Before we start pulling people off airplanes and denying them jobs based on large-scale data-mining, we need to know whether this technology will generate too few solid leads at the cost of too many false alarms and ruined reputations."

Smoking caused Udairi blaze

CAMP UDAIRI, Kuwait — Marine Staff Sgt. Brian Yount received an e-mail Tuesday from Texas saying his brother, Army Staff Sgt. Kenneth Yount, narrowly escaped a fiery inferno at his camp in the Kuwaiti desert.

About 2:15 p.m. Tuesday, fire swept through three empty festival tents and a smaller tent where soldiers from the Fort Hood-based 62nd Engineer Battalion were making morale calls home.

Brian, 34, learned from his sister-in-law, Wendy, at Fort Hood, that his brother had only the shirt left on his back. Luckily, the two brothers were only a few miles apart.

At Camp Fox, Brian packed some supplies and headed to Camp Udairi, about 25 miles north of Kuwait City. He found his sibling sifting through a pile of charred equipment in the remains of an Army tent.

"Here's a pair of clean drawers," Brian said, passing his brother fresh underwear and a handful of other new clothes. "I'm sure you could use them."

Other soldiers stopped by, offering clothes and gear. A sergeant major from the 1st Brigade, 1st Armored Division collected donations from his soldiers and came over with armfuls of assistance for the engineers.

"That was just awesome," Kenneth Yount, 36, said. "We really appreciated that."

While the brothers enjoyed their reunion, their thoughts turned to two more brothers still serving in Iraq. Their older half-brother, Marine Sgt. Mike Roberts, is assigned to the 4th Light Armored Recon near the Iranian border. Younger half-brother Army Pfc. Jonathan Kreuster, 20, serves with the 101st Airborne Division's field artillery.

Meanwhile, several teams of fire investigators nailed down the fire's start point.

"Smoking was this cause of the fire," said Sgt. Brady Brewer, 31, of Racine, Wis., who investigated the blaze. "Someone thought the shaded area behind the tent was a good place to hunker down and have a cigarette."

One soldier was slightly burned running from the tent.

War crimes appeal

BRUSSELS, Belgium — The lawyer who filed a war crimes complaint against the commander of U.S.-led forces in Iraq, Army Gen. Tommy Franks, said Wednesday he will appeal a government decision to refer the case to the United States.

Attorney Jan Fermon, who represents 19 civilians wounded or bereaved in the Iraq war, said the case could not be handled fairly by the U.S. legal system since Washington had already taken such a clear stance in defense of Franks.

U.K. officer investigated

LONDON — A senior British army officer is being investigated over allegations that he mistreated prisoners of war in Iraq, the Ministry of Defence said Wednesday.

Defence sources said the officer under investigation is Lt. Col. Tim Collins, who made headlines on the eve of battle with a stirring speech to his troops urging them to fight with honor.

Japan plans aid for Iraq

TOKYO — Japan plans to spend \$46 million on reconstruction in Iraq including projects to create jobs and reopen schools, the government said Wednesday.

The money is part of the \$100 million Tokyo announced it was setting aside last month to help the war-battered nation. It has spent \$32 million so far, mostly on emergency shipments of food and medical supplies.

Election for Iraq not expected before July

BAGHDAD, Iraq — A national conference that will pick Iraq's new interim government will probably be delayed until mid-July, the top American official in Iraq said Wednesday.

Six weeks after the U.S. military took Baghdad and Saddam Hussein's regime collapsed, Iraq remains without a formal government. Ministries are operating under American auspices, staffed by Iraqis who know their employment may be limited.

L. Paul Bremer, Iraq's U.S. civilian administrator, estimated the conference would be held in mid-July, claiming that an earlier June deadline was created by the press. Other Western officials have said the plan was to assemble about 300 representatives from Iraq's many factions who would elect a new authority.

Until Wednesday, U.S. officials working to build an interim Iraqi government had insisted that their plans hadn't changed. But they also refused to repeat the timetable outlined after President Bush's envoy, Zalmay Khalilzad, held an April 28 conference with Iraqi political leaders. That timetable called for some form of interim government in early June. Bremer did not say what caused the delay.

From staff and wire reports

Four Afghans killed near U.S. Embassy

The Associated Press

KABUL, Afghanistan — In a rare confrontation between U.S. forces and their Afghan allies, U.S. Marines guarding the fortress-like American Embassy compound exchanged fire Wednesday with Afghan troops in a brief gun-battle that left up to four Afghans dead.

Afghan authorities called the shoot-out "a misunderstanding," saying jittery U.S. Marines opened fire believing they'd come under attack. The U.S. Embassy was tightlipped, saying only that the loss of life was regrettable and an investigation was under way.

The shooting came a day after the United States raised its terror alert level, warning of possible attacks on Americans around the globe.

There have been few signs of serious tension between the U.S. military and its Afghan allies since U.S. forces deployed in the country after ousting the Taliban regime in 2001.

Troubles were first reported Tuesday night when an Afghan soldier inexplicably lobbed a grenade at U.S. Marines guarding the embassy, diplomatic and peacekeeping sources said on condition of anonymity. The grenade did not go off, however, and the soldier retreated to a barracks across the street.

Kabul Police Chief Basir Salangi said he believed Afghan soldiers were transferring weapons to an Afghan intelligence agency compound across the street from the embassy when nervous American soldiers, believing they were about to be attacked, opened fire.

"It was a misunderstanding between the American guards at the U.S. Embassy and our soldiers who were unloading weapons," Salangi said.

He said three Afghan soldiers were killed and two wounded.

Officials at the military hospital in Kabul said another soldier died shortly after being brought in. There were no reported U.S. casualties.

A spokesman for the international peacekeeping force that patrols Kabul, Dutch Lt. Col. Paul Kolken, said there were unconfirmed reports that Afghan soldiers had fired several shots at a vehicle passing by the embassy.

"In doing so, they fired in the direction of the American Embassy and the American soldiers standing guard there returned fire," Kolken said.

U.S. Embassy spokesman Alberto Fernandez issued a brief statement confirming only that "heightened tensions led to a live fire incident between U.S. Marines defending the embassy and Afghan military forces."

"Both sides will continue to meet and work to ensure security in the area. The U.S. Embassy regrets the loss of life in this incident," Fernandez said, refusing further comment.

Saudi arrests reportedly foil planned suicide attack

The Associated Press

RIYADH, Saudi Arabia — Three al-Qaida suspects arrested in Saudi Arabia this week planned to hijack a plane from the southwestern port city of Jiddah, Saudi security officials said, in what appeared to be a plot for a suicide attack.

The officials, speaking on condition of anonymity, said the three men arrested Monday in Jiddah were Moroccans but offered few other details. Nawaf Obaid, a private Saudi oil security analyst with close contacts to the Saudi government, said the three were part of a larger cell that was "in the process of carrying out suicide attacks against landmarks in the kingdom."

News of the plot came on the same day that the Arab satellite station Al-Jazeera aired excerpts of what it said was an audiotape of Osama bin Laden's top lieutenant in al-Qaida calling on Muslims to carry out attacks similar to the Sept. 11 terror attacks in the United States.

"Consider your 19 brothers who attacked America in Washington and New York with their planes as an example," a strong voice could be heard saying as the station showed a file photo of the lieutenant, Ayman al-Zawahiri, wearing a white turban.

Saudi security officials said the three suspects intended to hijack a Sudan-bound flight, but did not say if there was any plot to use the plane as a missile.

The Moroccans were arrested amid a sweep following three suicide attacks in the Saudi capital, Riyadh, that killed 34 people on May 12. It was unclear whether investigators believe the three men were connected to the Riyadh bombings.

Reports of a hijacking plot and the targeting of Saudi landmarks, along with the al-Zawahiri audiotape, were likely to heighten tensions in an already fearful kingdom.

Four suspects were in already custody for the Riyadh car bombings.

A Saudi official said on condition of anonymity Tuesday that investigators were aware of about 50 militants, some now dead, believed to belong to

three Saudi cells, including the one that carried out the May 12 bombings. Another cell has fled Saudi Arabia and the third is at large in the kingdom, the official said.

The official indicated the surviving militants were ready to volunteer for more suicide strikes, were tied to al-Qaida and had hard-core sympathizers numbering "in the low hundreds."

A number of foreigners have left the country, and some international companies have urged employees' dependents to return home. On Wednesday, the International Schools Group, which runs at least 10 schools in Saudi Arabia, announced on its Web site that its schools would close immediately for the rest of the school year.

The U.S. Embassy in Kuwait reminded American citizens in Kuwait to be "especially cautious and vigilant during this period of heightened concern." The message said terrorist actions against U.S. interests in the Middle East could include suicide operations, bombings, kidnappings and use of nonconventional weapons.

Purported al-Qaida tape encourages 9/11-like attacks

The Associated Press

CAIRO, Egypt — The Arab satellite station Al-Jazeera aired excerpts Wednesday of what it said was an audiotape of Osama bin Laden's top lieutenant calling on Muslims to imitate the Sept. 11, 2001 attacks in strikes on the United States and its allies in the war on Iraq.

"Consider your 19 brothers who attacked America in Washington and New York with their planes as an example," a strong voice could be heard saying as the station showed a file photo of Ayman al-Zawahiri wearing a white turban. Children's voices could be heard in the background.

The identity of the speaker could not be independently authenticated although the voice was similar to al-Zawahiri's, judging from previous audiotapes and videotapes attributed to the Egyptian militant. American officials said they were reviewing the audiotape.

In the tape, the speaker also called for attacks on Jews and referred to demonstrations ahead of the U.S.-led invasion of Iraq and in its early days — perhaps a suggestion of when the recording was made.

"The protests, demonstrations and conferences won't work. Nothing will help you except carrying weapons and harming your enemies — Americans and Jews," he said.

"Oh Muslims, take your decision against the embassies of America, England, Australia and Norway, their interests, their companies and their employees," the speaker said. "Turn the earth under their feet into fire."

Britain was the United States' main partner in the war on Iraq, and Australia contributed troops. Norway did not take part in the Iraq fighting, but provided special forces and other support in the war that dislodged al-Qaida from Afghanistan.

The speaker also lashed out at Arab leaders offering "airports and the facilities" to allied troops, an apparent reference to the U.S.-led war on Iraq.

Drug use allegations investigated

SPANGDAHLEH, Germany — Law enforcement officials are investigating allegations of illegal drug use among family members at Spangdahle Air Base and the Bitburg annex in Germany.

Air Force Maj. Melinda Morgan, chief of public affairs for the 52nd Fighter Wing, was unable to give details about the ongoing investigation, which was started several weeks ago.

"We had someone make allegations against family members about drug use," she said. "We are investigating it."

No criminal charges have been filed, but seven administrative actions have been taken so far against family members for use of controlled substances, such as marijuana.

A press release issued by the wing Wednesday noted that family members are not subject to the Uniform Code of Military Justice, "but are subject to host nation laws, [Department of Defense] instructions and installation directives and policies."

Because of privacy concerns, Morgan could not discuss whether the family members involved are children.

DOD civilian overhaul plan draws fire

WASHINGTON — As Congress prepares this week to pass a sweeping \$400 billion national security measure, a proposal to overhaul the Pentagon's civilian work force is drawing fire from both parties in Capitol Hill.

Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld is pushing Congress to include a far-reaching plan he unveiled a month ago to build a new personnel structure for the roughly 700,000 civilian workers at the Pentagon.

The proposal would divorce Defense Department workers from the civil service statutes that have protected federal employees for decades, giving Rumsfeld and future Defense secretaries wide latitude on hiring, firing, pay, promotion and labor disputes.

That flexibility, Rumsfeld says, is critical to building a more innovative, agile civilian work force. Doing so "is nothing less than a national security requirement, because it goes straight to how well we will be able to defend our country in the years to come." Rumsfeld told the House Government Reform Committee this year.

Democrats and federal employee unions vehemently oppose the plan, which they say strips federal employees of important labor rights and threatens to set a dangerous precedent that could allow politics

NCO defends actions in death

BY TERRY BOYD

Stars and Stripes

MANNHEIM, Germany — Sgt. Everett Robinson's three hours of testimony Wednesday came down to one issue — control.

How much physical control Robinson had over his emotions and his knife-wielding girlfriend, Pearlina McKinney, the night he killed her.

How much control Robinson had over a life that included a long-term relationship — a "love triangle," a prosecutor called it — he had in Germany, while he had a wife and daughter in the States.

Robinson, of the 69th Transportation Company, 28th Transportation Battalion of the 21st Theater Support Command, is accused of premeditated murder, and faces a maximum sentence of life in prison without the possibility of parole. He claims he killed her in self-defense.

Wednesday was the second day of testimony in the trial, at Mannheim's Taylor Barracks.

On the stand, Robinson twice recounted the night of Oct. 5, when he strangled McKinney to death.

Guided by defense attorney Maj. Kwasi Hawks, Robinson described an evening of physical and verbal abuse from McKinney culminating in a furious struggle to defend himself — and reason with her — as she tried to stab him with an 8-inch knife.

Robinson described 10 or 15 minutes of fighting during which he struck McKinney in the head, pushed her head away as she tried to stab him, then finally choked her, all in self-defense.

Under aggressive cross examination, prosecutor Capt. Richard DiMeglio hammered home on several points:

■ Robinson claims to have killed McKinney in self-defense, but was able to muscle her around before killing her.

■ Robinson received no serious wounds in the fight with McKinney, while he struck at least two severe blows to her head that brought blood, then choked her to death.

■ Robinson never tried to leave the apartment as, he claimed, McKinney became more agitated.

"Why didn't you walk out the door?" DiMeglio asked. "If you wanted to get away, that would be the smart thing to do, wouldn't it?" Robinson responded that he couldn't find his keys.

Killing McKinney, DiMeglio said, would have solved what Robinson conceded was "a big problem": a 19-year marriage, and a seven-year relationship with McKinney, who wanted to marry him. But Robinson maintained that he loved both women.

Robinson, who never spoke above a low monotone while on the stand, said he had been drinking during the day on Oct. 5 before he and McKinney had a night on the town. McKinney became angry during the evening, which included drinks at the Benjamin Franklin Village bowling center in Mannheim where McKinney worked, and she accused him of talking to other women.

When they returned to the Neuhermsheim apartment they shared, Robinson testified, McKinney first sulked, then began striking him.

He said as he tried to find his keys to leave, McKinney got a knife from the kitchen and attacked him.

After he realized McKinney was dead, he decided to kill himself, Robinson said. He picked her body off the bedroom floor and placed it on their bed. Then he cut his wrists, knelt beside the bed "and said what I thought was my last prayer, kissed Pearl goodbye and lay down beside her" to die.

During Wednesday's court-martial, Hawks brought in witnesses describing Robinson as a diligent worker with no violent history, in contrast to McKinney, a volatile woman who attacked Robinson with a knife in 1996.

In the 16 months they worked together, "I can't say I ever saw him angry," said Sgt. 1st Class Charles Shank, of the 69th Transportation Company. In situations where Shank said he would have "cursed [a soldier] out," Robinson simply "would make the soldier do his job. That was it."

John Davis, who owns a Mannheim barbecue restaurant said Robinson "was always quiet." McKinney "was the one who was in control of everything. She was the bossy one."

The trial is scheduled to resume Thursday.

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to creep into personnel decisions at all government agencies, leaving workers unprotected.

The changes in question would free the Pentagon from a number of civil service rules, allowing the secretary of Defense to write entirely new personnel regulations without involvement by the Office of Personnel Management, the agency that oversees the federal work force.

Traditional salary scales for federal employees would be scrapped in favor of a performance-based pay system, and hiring and firing would be accomplished more quickly, and with less red tape. Labor disputes would ultimately be decided by the agency, after a consultation process with employees and Congress.

Official: Exchange merger will help

ARLINGTON, Va. — Bringing the three armed service exchange systems under a single umbrella will not result in store closings or operations that are turned over to a private contractor, the senior Pentagon official in charge of the consolidation effort told Stripes on Wednesday.

"Privatization is not on the scope," said C.J. Wax, a retired Air Force major general who formerly headed the Army and Air Force Exchange Services. Nor are store closings, he added.

The point of consolidation is not to cut back on customer service, but to enhance it, Wax said in an interview in his new Pentagon office.

"There is no other retailer on the planet that can do what the exchanges do today," Wax said.

Consolidation "is to protect, preserve, and improve delivery of this benefit ... and [get] the dividends back to [morale, welfare and recreation programs] that are so critical."

Foglesong to move to USAFE

Gen. Gregory S. Martin, commander of U.S. Air Forces in Europe, is being reassigned to stateside duties and will be replaced by the Air Force's vice chief of staff, Gen. Robert H. Foglesong.

Martin has served as USAFE commander since January 2000. His new job will be as commander, Air Force Materiel Command, Wright-Patterson Air Force Base, Ohio.

Foglesong will also replace Martin as commander, Allied Air Forces Northern Europe with NATO, and commander of the Air Force component of the U.S. European Command.

The nominations were made by President Bush and

announced Tuesday by Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld. The Senate Armed Services Committee has final approval on the nominations.

Other nominations announced Tuesday include:

■ Air Force Lt. Gen. T. Michael Moseley to general with assignment as vice chief of staff, U.S. Air Force, Washington. Moseley is serving as commander, 9th Air Force, Air Combat Command; and commander, U.S. Central Command Air Forces, Shaw Air Force Base, S.C.

■ Navy Vice Adm. Michael G. Mullen to admiral with assignment as vice chief of Naval Operations, Washington. He is currently deputy chief of Naval Operations for Resources, Requirements and Assessments, N8, Office of the Chief of Naval Operations in Washington.

■ Marine Corps Maj. Gen. Jan C. Huly to lieutenant general with assignment as the deputy commandant for Plans, Policies and Operations, Washington. Huly is serving as commanding general, Marine Corps Recruit Depot/Western Recruiting Region, San Diego.

■ Air Force Maj. Gen. Daniel P. Leaf to lieutenant general with assignment as vice commander, Air Force Space Command, Peterson Air Force Base, Colo. Leaf is currently director, Operational Capability Requirements, deputy chief of staff, Headquarters U.S. Air Force, Washington.

Plan to repeal tax credit repealed

WASHINGTON — A \$35 billion tax increase on Americans working abroad has been dropped under terms of a preliminary compromise that House and Senate negotiators reached in connection with a multibillion-dollar tax cut bill.

That provision had been intended to offset at part of the costs of the tax cut by ending the \$80,000 U.S. income tax exemption on American salaries earned abroad.

What would have been a trade-off calling for raising taxes on this group of wage-earners had caused political problems for Republicans who staunchly opposed the idea.

The controversy arose as the GOP was trying to round up support for the tax cut legislation President Bush wants. He initially proposed a 10-year, \$726 billion tax cut. But that now is being narrowed by a House-Senate conference committee to something in the range of \$350 billion to \$550 billion.

Lawmakers favoring substantial tax relief of the sort Bush advocates decided to raise selected taxes over the next decade, and that was when the provision affecting people working abroad then came into play.

From staff and wire reports

Army takes 'good riddance' approach to deserters

BY PAUL PRINGLE

Los Angeles Times

Nick Thomas is a soldier without pity. He serves flag and country by dealing with the men and women who shucked the same Army uniform he wears. And he can't stand their whining.

"I have no respect for these people," said Thomas, 25, his soft face stiffening. "I hate hearing their sob stories."

He hears plenty. As a military police investigator based at Fort Irwin in a Mars-colored corner of the Mojave Desert northeast of Barstow, Calif., Thomas is responsible for picking up deserters who get snared in the law enforcement net across Southern California and Nevada. Listening to their tales of woe is distasteful enough in peacetime, Thomas says. When comrades are under fire overseas, he finds the subjects of his mission particularly offensive.

"They train as part of a group, as a family, and then they don't go," he said, shaking his head in disgust. "You want to make them cry."

But he says he does nothing to evoke tears — no interrogation-room bullying about a court-martial, no threats of a long stretch in the brig.

Officials say today's Army takes a passive, good-riddance approach to its runaways, who account for fewer than 1 percent of enlistees.

Prosecutions and prison sentences have become rare. Most of the several thousand deserters who bolt each year aren't even actively pursued. Of those who do wind up in custody, more than 90 percent are discharged as quickly as the paperwork can be processed.

"Hunt them down? No way," said Thomas, who sat in a wind-hammered bungalow as Humvees lumbered along the dusty roads outside. "I've never heard of a court-martial" for a deserter.

The Army has been a volunteer vocation since the end of the Vietnam War-era draft, so commanders have grown increasingly content to cut loose anyone unwilling to fight. A similar attitude prevails in the Marine Corps and Navy, officials say, adding that it hasn't changed because of the campaigns in Afghanistan and Iraq.

"We really don't look for deserters anymore," said Mark Raimondi, spokesman for the Army's Criminal Investigation Command. "If folks don't want to stay around, we don't want them."

Deserters are generally free to run until local civilian authorities happen to detain them — often for traffic violations — and warrant checks identify them as military fugitives. A large number turn themselves in. Others are given up by parents or spouses.

The Sudbury brothers did not flee, but their actions carried the risk of a desertion charge. As their units prepared to deploy to Iraq, Wes Sudbury, then an Army private based in Germany, and Michael Sudbury, who was an Army Reserve sergeant in Provo, Utah, refused to go. Instead, they asked to be released as conscientious objectors.

"I had become opposed to all war, and I would have taken any consequences," said Michael, 27, who spent nearly nine years as a reservist. "What kind of army would put a gun to your head and say you have to go anyway?"

Wes, 25, who lives in Hawaii, was halfway through his four-year enlistment when he sought to get out. "I joined the Army for career options and to learn about the world," he said. "But later I didn't really agree with the way things were done in the Army."

In the end, the Sudburys were granted honorable discharges. Wes as a conscientious objector and Michael because his enlistment expired while his request was pending. They were never arrested.

Sooner or later, most deserters face the music, Pentagon officials say. The tune is typically an administrative discharge on less-than-honorable terms, which can disqualify deserters for federal jobs as well as government-subsidized home loans and tuition grants.

That doesn't seem enough to gung-ho types like Thomas, not when soldiers are shipping

out to foreign fronts. They say deserters, at minimum, should be required to finish their tour — preferably in an undesirable assignment.

"You join the Army to serve your country, and now that it's time to serve, you're going to leave?" asked Peter Cormier, 30, Thomas' supervisor. "I'm not a field soldier, but if I was asked to go, I'd go."

Cormier was walking through the provost marshal's station, a cinder-block maze that houses the lockup at Fort Irwin. MPs in camouflage fatigues milled about. The words "loyalty," "duty" and "respect" were painted on the walls of a holding cell — scoldings for a captive audience.

The only prisoner on this day was a young soldier who had been AWOL for two weeks. He surrendered at the front gate and was awaiting transport to Fort Lewis in Washington state, the post he fled. He would travel by commercial airline, unescorted. The man, whom MPs would not allow to be interviewed, sat in the cage with his head bowed.

Soldiers usually are classified as deserters when they have been absent without leave for 30 days and show no intention of returning.

Last year 3,800 Army troops deserted, meaning that the Army's desertion rate was one-sixth of what it was during the Vietnam War, when it totaled 5 percent of the rolls.

A 2002 study by the Army Research Institute found that about 70 percent of deserters left during their first year of duty. They tended to be younger than the average recruit and likelier to come from broken homes. Many had been in trouble with the law before. The majority cited either family problems or a "failure to adapt" as the reason they deserted.

Wartime desertions can be a capital crime, on paper anyway. The last U.S. deserter put to death was Eddie Slovic, a World War II Army private. He was executed by a firing squad in France. Army spokespersons say an official count of battlefield desertions since the Vietnam War is not available, but they could recall none occurring.

Lesser penalties range from extra chores for rehabilitated deserters who serve out their hitch to three years behind bars. Most of those sentenced to prison had committed crimes such as robbery and assault while AWOL. Otherwise, the norm for deserters is an order to get lost.

That's the way it should be, say advocates for soldiers who choose to leave.

"There are hopelessly naive young people who went into the military for the college money and never thought about going to war — and then they face being deployed to Iraq," said J.E. McNeil, executive director of the Center on Conscience & War. The Washington, D.C., group counsels soldiers seeking conscientious objector discharges. The Army approves about 40 such petitions a year.

Teresa Panepinto, a coordinator for the Oakland, Calif.-based Central Committee for Conscientious Objectors, said a third of the callers to the committee's hotline had gone AWOL or were thinking of doing so. "They are in desperate straits," she added. Back at Fort Irwin, Thomas remains unmoved.

"I hear it all the time: 'I didn't feel like being in the Army anymore,'" he said. "I have family problems, I have financial problems, I just wanted the college money." He rolled his eyes. "I hate that stuff."

The Kentucky native is the son of two retired Army officers; his father served in Vietnam, his mother in Somalia. Thomas joined six years ago and has done stints at Fort Knox, Ky., and in South Korea.

He has been on deserter detail for the last year. To locate the absent soldiers, he mainly sits by the phone, waiting for calls from police departments and border agents. He picks up two or three deserters in the average week. This day was busy, with four cases: the soldier in the cell, a woman who turned herself in after six years on the lam, a man stopped at the Mexican border and another arrested in the San Diego area.

If they had sad stories to tell, Thomas wasn't interested.

"You have soldiers thousands of miles away who are getting shot at it," he said. "They have problems too; family problems, children who are sick. But they don't leave."

Christie Whitman resigns as head of EPA

WASHINGTON — Christie Whitman, often at odds with the Bush White House over environmental issues and a lightning rod for the administration's critics, resigned Wednesday as head of the Environmental Protection Agency.

Whitman said in a letter to President Bush that she was leaving to spend time with family.

"As rewarding as the past two-and-a-half years have been for me professionally, it is time to return to my home and husband in New Jersey, which I love just as you do your home state of Texas," she wrote Bush.

With Whitman's departure as EPA administrator, Bush loses one of the most prominent women in his Cabinet — a moderate former New Jersey governor selected by the president to help soften his image as a political conservative, particularly on environmental issues.

With Bush's re-election campaign gearing up, the White House has lost senior staff and Cabinet members that if they are thinking of leaving the administration, this is the time to resign; otherwise, they will be expected to remain aboard until after the 2004 election if Bush wins a second term. White House press secretary Ari Fleischer announced Monday that he will resign in July.

House OKs plan to speed logging

WASHINGTON — Logging on 20 million acres of federal forests could be accelerated in an effort to reduce the risk of catastrophic fires under rules changes backed by President Bush and approved by the House.

Republicans are moving to eliminate some environmental reviews and limit appeals on overgrown woodlands and grassy areas most vulnerable to the type of wildfires that charred 7 million acres across 15 states last year.

The House voted 256-170 on Tuesday to approve the bill sponsored by Rep. Scott McInnis, R-Colo.

Democrats and environmental groups said the legislation would let logging companies cut trees on large stretches of forest while not doing anything to reduce the threat of fire for people living near the forests.

Judge asks woman if she's a terrorist

TARRYTOWN, N.Y. — An Arab-American woman who was fighting a pair of parking tickets says she fainted in court after the judge asked if she was a terrorist.

The judge confirmed that he made the remark but said he was "probably kidding with her." And he denied her claim that he also accused her of financially supporting terrorists.

There was no transcript of the proceedings. The woman, Anissa Khoder, has filed a complaint against the judge, Village Justice William Crosbie, with the state Commission on Judicial Conduct.

Khoder said that as she approached Crosbie's table in court on Thursday, the judge considered her name out loud and asked if she was a terrorist. She said she was stunned and offended but kept that to herself.

She claimed that after giving the judge her explanation for why the tickets should be dismissed, "He said something like, 'You have money to support the terrorists, but you don't want to pay the ticket.' I could not believe I was hearing that."

She collapsed to the floor. A court officer and two Tarrytown police officers helped her and called for an ambulance, but Khoder recovered and declined medical attention.

Crosbie, 79, told the newspaper that he asked Khoder if she were a terrorist, and acknowledged that it "may have been inappropriate." But he denied saying anything further regarding terrorism.

Ex-employee pleads guilty to poisoning beef

GRAND RAPIDS, Mich. — A former grocery store worker pleaded guilty Wednesday to poisoning about 250 pounds of ground beef with insecticide, sickening 92 people.

Prosecutors described Randy Jay Bertram, 39, as a disgruntled employee. He faces up to 20 years in prison for poisoning food with the intent to cause serious bodily injury.

According to U.S. Attorney Margaret Chiara, Bertram poured the insecticide into the beef as he prepared it for sale Dec. 31 at the Family Fare supermarket in Byron Center, just outside Grand Rapids.

The insecticide, called Black Leaf 40, uses high concentrations of nicotine as its active ingredient. The bottle warns that swallowing it could be fatal.

Bertram put the poisoned beef in one- to three-pound packages, then watched as it was sold to the public, prosecutors said.

A lethal dose of nicotine for an average adult is estimated to be between 30 and 60 milligrams. Tests indicated that a quarter-pound burger made from the poisoned beef would contain about 34 milligrams of nicotine, Chiara said.

Man pleads innocent to possessing cyanide

KANSAS CITY, Mo. — A naturalized citizen from Iran who has a history of mental illness pleaded innocent to possessing enough cyanide to harm hundreds of people, authorities said.

Hessam S. Ghane, 53, was undergoing a court-ordered mental evaluation and remained in custody pending the results.

Ghane has no ties to any terrorist organization, an FBI agent testified Tuesday before a federal magistrate. Psychiatrist Howard Houghton testified that Ghane suffered suicidal depression and paranoia.

Houghton said he called police in February after Ghane threatened government groups and unnamed individuals. After making the threats, Houghton said, Ghane said: "You know I have access to chemicals and I know chemistry."

An indictment unsealed on Friday accuses Ghane of possessing 177 grams of 75 percent pure potassium cyanide. U.S. Attorney Todd Graves said he believes hundreds of people could have been harmed if the cyanide were "structured properly."

From wire reports

Blair laughs at Times

NEW YORK — Former New York Times reporter Jayson Blair said he "couldn't stop laughing" when the newspaper corrected his fraudulent description of an American POW's home in West Virginia, according to excerpts of an interview with the New York Observer.

"That's my favorite, just because the description was so far off from the reality. And the way they described it in The Times story ... I couldn't stop laughing," Blair said in an interview. The newspaper made excerpts available to The Associated Press on Tuesday.

In one of his few interviews since resigning from the Times on May 1, Blair told the Observer that he "fooled some of the most brilliant people in journalism" with his reporting.

The Times found fraud, plagiarism and inaccuracies in 36 of 73 articles examined between October and April.

Newsweek has reported that Blair signed with literary agent David Vigliano to market his story for possible book and movie deals. The magazine, citing friends of the ex-reporter, also reported that Blair had sought treatment for substance abuse.

According to excerpts from the Observer, Blair said his deceptions stemmed from personal problems.

"I was either going to kill myself or I was going to kill the journalist persona," he told the magazine. "So Jayson Blair the human being could live, Jayson Blair the journalist had to die."

Reporter booed

CHICAGO — A New York Times reporter cut short a keynote address to graduates at a private Illinois college over the weekend after audience members shouted down his comments about the war in Iraq.

Chris Hedges, a Pulitzer Prize winner and author of a recent book that describes war as an addiction, was booed Saturday at Rockford College, a small liberal arts school 80 miles northwest of Chicago. After protesters rushed the stage and twice cut power to the microphone, Hedges cut his speech short.

"He delivered what I guess I would refer to as a fairly strident perspective on the war in Iraq and American policy," college President Paul Pribbenow said Tuesday. "I think our audience at commencement were not prepared for that."

Many audience members turned their backs on Hedges, while others booed and shouted, said Pribbenow, who at one point pleaded to let the speech continue.

Hedges said he had given similar talks at several other colleges on his book, but had never had such a response.

Elinor Radlund, who attended the ceremony, said a woman beside her began singing "God Bless America" while a man rushed down the aisle shouting, "Go home!"

"It just got to be a very nasty situation," Radlund said.

Student accused

HUMBLE, Texas — A 17-year-old high school student in the northeast Houston suburb of Humble is accused of illegally accessing the school system's computer, obtaining personal information of students and staff, including Social Security numbers.

Theodis Butler was charging fellow students about \$20 apiece to change their grades, Houston television station KTRK reported, quoting school officials.

Butler has been charged with breaching computer security, a third-degree felony.

Eric Squire, a police officer for the Humble Independent School District, helped set up a sting operation that caught Butler, officials said. Butler, who had his own identification number, portrayed himself as a teacher when he went into the files in April, Squire said.

Investigators are trying to determine if thousands of computer files were changed or deleted. School officials are reviewing their computer security system.

From The Associated Press

Federal prosecutor: 258 women killed in Juarez in past decade

The Associated Press

MEXICO CITY — The federal attorney general's office said Wednesday that 258 women have been killed since 1993 in the border city of Juarez — its first public tally of a string of controversial murders since federal investigators became involved in the cases.

Despite a string of arrests, bodies have continued to turn up in and around Juarez, a city of 1.3 million across the border from El Paso, Texas. Many of the victims have been young, slender women, most of whom were strangled and left half-clothed.

Last month, the federal attorney general's office took over the investigation of 14 of the cases from state police in

Chihuahua, where Juarez is located. Before that, the federal attorney general had stayed out of the investigation.

Murder is normally a state crime, but federal investigators can take over an investigation under certain circumstances. Federal investigators recently said they had evidence indicating women may have been victims of an international organ trafficking ring — a federal crime.

It has been unclear just how many women have been murdered over the past decade in Juarez.

Mexico's National Commission on Human Rights said in April that 232 such murders had been documented. Nongovernmental groups have estimated the number of victims at more than 300.

The murder tally announced by the federal attorney general is based on figures supplied by the state attorney general in Chihuahua.

State prosecutors also indicated that there are 98 investigations in process, that 67 people have been sentenced in connection with the murders and that arrest orders are outstanding for 17 people, the federal attorney general said.

In the Wednesday news release, the federal attorney general provided a year-by-year breakdown of the murders in Juarez: 18 in 1993, 19 in 1994, 34 in 1995, 32 in 1996, 31 in 1997, 29 in 1998, 17 in 1999, 31 in 2000, 28 in 2001, and 13 in 2002. So far in 2003, the murders of six women have been reported.

Canada deals with U.S. beef import ban

TORONTO — A case of mad cow disease in the heart of Canada's cattle country has authorities scrambling to trace its origins while contending with bans imposed by the United States and other countries on all Canadian beef imports.

The announcement Tuesday of the first known case of bovine spongiform encephalopathy, or BSE, in North America in a decade left the restaurant and food industries trying to reassure consumers they had nothing to fear.

"This one confirmed cow has no connection with McDonald's Canada," said a statement by the hamburger restaurant chain. Other popular outlets issued similar assurances that their food was safe.

While the case raised concern because Canada and the United States have adopted feeding practices intended to prevent the spread of the illness, authorities said it was isolated to one cow out of more than 3 million slaughtered a year.

Shares of big U.S. hamburger chains fell sharply following the news, with McDonald's, the world's largest restaurant company, off \$1.02, or 5.6 percent, to \$17.14 in late afternoon trading on the New York Stock Exchange. Also sinking were fast-food rival Wendy's International, Jack in the Box and Tyson, the world's largest meat company. Outback Steakhouse Inc. also fell.

WHO says Taiwan is unsafe for travelers

TAIPEI, Taiwan — The World Health Organization extended its travel advisory to all of Taiwan on Wednesday as the island reported 35 new SARS cases and officials warned that the outbreak has yet to peak.

The U.N. health agency said it expanded the advisory — which originally included only the capital, Taipei — because the often-deadly virus had spread beyond the northern city.

"WHO is now recommending, as a measure of precaution, that people planning to travel to Taiwan ... consider postponing all but essential travel," the agency said.

With 418 cases and 52 deaths, Taiwan has the world's third-highest toll of severe acute respiratory syndrome after China and Hong Kong. More than 12,000 people are under quarantine.

Quakes shake Turkey

ISTANBUL, Turkey — Two moderate earthquakes shook eastern Turkey and another rattled the northwest Wednesday, the Istanbul-based Kandilli Observatory said. No injuries or damage were reported.

The first two quakes were centered in Bingol province, where a magnitude 6.4 quake earlier this month killed 176 people, including 83 children who were crushed in their school dormitory.

Most of Turkey lies on the active north Anatolian fault, and quakes are frequent.

Abbas cancels Gaza trip

BEIT HANOUN, Gaza Strip — Palestinian Prime Minister Mahmoud Abbas canceled a visit Wednesday to this town in northern Gaza after Israeli tanks and bulldozers once again rumbled in to try to destroy areas used by Palestinian militants.

The town had been the scene of a rare demonstration Tuesday, with hundreds of angry Palestinian residents burning tires and blocking roads to protest against Palestinian militants, whose rocket attacks against the nearby Israeli town of Sderot sparked an earlier Israeli invasion.

Stonehenge discoveries

LONDON — Archaeologists who last year unearthed the remains of a Bronze Age archer at Stonehenge said Wednesday they have found six more bodies near the mysterious ring of ancient monoliths.

The remains of four adults and two children were found about half a mile from that of the archer, dubbed "The King of Stonehenge" by Britain's tabloid press.

Radiocarbon tests will be done to find out more precise dates for the burials, but the group is believed to have lived around 2300 B.C., during the building of Stonehenge at Amesbury, 75 miles southwest of London, said Wessex Archaeology, which excavated the site.

Anti-tobacco treaty OK'd

GENEVA — Crowning four years of negotiations, the World Health Organization gave preliminary approval Tuesday to a historic anti-tobacco treaty, with minister after minister proclaiming that it would save untold millions of lives.

The treaty will ban or restrict advertising, introduce more-prominent health warnings and control use of terms such as low-tar on cigarette packs. It provides for tougher international measures against secondhand smoke and smuggling and introduces the concept of manufacturer liability.

Bush-Roh talks anger N. Korea

SEOUL, South Korea — North Korea condemned a recent summit between President Bush and South Korea's president, and warned Tuesday of an "unspeakable disaster" for the South if it confronts the communist state over its nuclear weapons programs.

The threat, made during inter-Korean economic talks in Pyongyang, was North Korea's first reaction to last week's meeting between Bush and South Korean President Roh Moo-hyun in Washington.

Bush and Roh said last week they would "not tolerate" atomic weapons in North Korea. They said they would seek a peaceful solution to the nuclear standoff but would consider "further steps" if Pyongyang escalates tensions.

A senior Bush administration official has said "further steps" could mean military action as well as "a lot of things in the toolbox."

China honors sailors killed in accident

BEIJING — China's military held a memorial Tuesday for 70 sailors killed in a mysterious submarine accident on the Yellow Sea, state television said.

The government announced May 2 that the accident — one of China's deadliest military disasters — had occurred, but hasn't said how the sailors died or when.

Some 1,200 sailors and relatives of the dead attended the service in the northeastern port of Dalian, China Central Television said. The report was the top item on its national noon newscast.

Flags flew at half-mast and navy ships in the harbor blew their horns for one minute during the service, the report said.

Former President Jiang Zemin, who heads the commission that runs China's 2.5 million-member military, and President Hu Jintao sent wreaths of flowers, CCTV said. Gen. Guo Boxiong, a vice chairman of the commission, expressed condolences on their behalf.

The disaster was the first fatal submarine accident disclosed by China's secretive military.

From wire reports

Piazza out 6 weeks, maybe rest of season

BY JOSH DUBOW

The Associated Press

NEW YORK — Mike Piazza took a minute as he tried to pick out one positive from this dismal season before finally remembering his game-ending homer 10 days earlier.

That might end up being the last good memory Piazza has from the 2003 season. In a season full of bad news, Piazza received the worst of all Tuesday:

The torn muscle in his right groin could sideline him for the rest of the year.

"It is in the back of your mind. It's the ultimate fear," Piazza said. "But I'm not looking at that right now. I just want to get the swelling out."

Piazza saw team physician Dr. Andrew Rokito, who said the All-Star catcher had a Grade 3 strain — the most serious — with the muscle partially torn off the bone. Piazza will not need surgery.

"Six weeks is certainly the low end of it," General Manager Steve Phillips

said. "It's hard to pinpoint beyond that."

When asked if the injury could be season-ending, Phillips said, "It's possible. We don't know. We're leaving it as an indefinite period of time. We can't pinpoint it. It depends on the symptoms and the rehab process."

Piazza was the Mets' leading hitter, batting .333 with seven homers and 15 RBIs before hurting himself trying to avoid an inside pitch from San Francisco's Jason Schmidt on Friday.

After a slow start, Piazza found his

groove before the injury, hitting .500 (12-for-24) with four homers and nine RBIs in his last seven games.

"The truly frustrating part is I felt like I was swinging the bat well," he said. "I went from a low period to a high period back to a low period. To go from hitting the ball as well as I can and seeing it as well as I can to being on the training table is disappointing."

Piazza, who will be on crutches for a few days, will begin his rehab after the swelling goes down in about two weeks.

Expos 6, Marlins 4

MONTREAL — Brian Schneider homered and Orlando Cabrera hit a two-run double to key a four-run fourth inning Tuesday, leading Montreal over Florida.

Javier Vazquez (4-2) won for the first time in five starts since April 24, allowing two runs and six hits in seven innings. Rocky Biddle pitched the ninth for his 13th save, and Montreal won for the sixth time in eight games.

Mike Lowell and Derrek Lee homered for Florida, which has lost four straight and dropped to 3-5 under new manager Jack McKeon.

National League

Phillies 11, Mets 7

NEW YORK — Pat Burrell hit a solo homer in the sixth inning off Jae Seo and a tying three-run shot off David Weathers in a seven-run seventh as Philadelphia overcame a 4-0 deficit to beat New York.

The Phillies have won four of their past five games.

Graeme Lloyd (1-1) gave up a single to the only batter he faced, Bobby

Abreu, and Pat Strange walked Mike Lieberthal, gave up a go-ahead single to David Bell, walked Ricky Ledee and gave up an RBI single to Nick Punto.

Brett Myers (4-3) won despite allowing four runs, four hits and three walks in six innings.

Reds 9, Braves 8

CINCINNATI — Ken Griffey Jr. homered for the first time since returning

from a dislocated shoulder, and Jason LaRue hit a tiebreaking two-run shot as Cincinnati beat Atlanta.

The Reds blew a 7-2 lead before LaRue connected in the eighth off Roberto Hernandez (3-1) for yet another late victory.

Vinny Castilla hit a pair of homers, including a three-run shot off Scott Sullivan (5-0) that tied it in the eighth. Scott Williamson gave up a solo homer to Rafael Furcal in the ninth before finishing it off for his 11th save in 12 chances.

Continued on Page 8

BASKETBALL

BEAVERTON, Ore. — Carmelo Anthony, the freshman who led Syracuse to the national championship in April, has signed a shoe and apparel deal with Nike.

The company did not reveal terms of the deal, though it is expected to be for six years.

Anthony is projected to be one of the first three players selected in the June 26 NBA Draft.

Anthony was named the Final Four's Most Outstanding Player, only the third freshman ever to earn the honor. He had a career-best 33 points and 14 rebounds in Syracuse's semifinal victory over Texas. He then scored 20 points in the championship game victory over Kansas.

BASEBALL

NEW YORK — A Brooklyn man was charged with stalking New York Mets General Manager Steve Phillips after a series of alleged tirades at Shea Stadium.

A judge ordered Matthew Barnes, 27, held without bail until the defendant can undergo a psychiatric exam.

Prosecutors said that since early January, Barnes repeatedly showed up outside offices at Shea, where he yelled, cursed and demanded to see Phillips.

Sports in brief

When asked to leave, he refused until removed by security, prosecutors added.

BOSTON — Pedro Martinez was scratched from his scheduled start against the New York Yankees and listed as day to day with a mild strain of a back muscle.

An MRI exam showed the strain in the latissimus dorsi, which runs from the back and around the side.

BOSTON — New York Yankees reliever Steve Karsay had arthroscopic surgery on his right shoulder and will miss the rest of the season.

Karsay had a partial tear of his rotator cuff repaired by Dr. James Andrews in Birmingham, Ala. The Yankees said Karsay is expected to be ready to pitch by spring training next year.

FOOTBALL

PHILADELPHIA — Eager to return to the Los Angeles area, the NFL will spend up to \$10 million looking into the viability of a stadium in Carson, Calif.

Commissioner Paul Tagliabue also said the league is just as interested in the development of a state-of-the-art stadium in Pasadena, site of the Rose Bowl. But the NFL has made no finan-

cial commitment to investigating any projects there.

Since the Rams and Raiders left after the 1994 season, Los Angeles has not had an NFL franchise. Several teams, including the Minnesota Vikings and Indianapolis Colts, have expressed interest in moving to the nation's No. 2 television market.

COLLEGE FOOTBALL

LAS VEGAS — John Robinson stepped down as UNLV's athletic director because of health concerns but will remain the school's football coach.

Robinson cited his health and his wife's fight with breast cancer. He was treated in March for a blocked coronary artery.

Robinson, who turns 68 in July, added athletic director to his role at UNLV in January 2002, after the Nevada Board of Regents waived a rule prohibiting one person from holding both posts.

SOCCER

SAN DIEGO — Soccer star Shannon MacMillan had reconstructive surgery on her right knee and will likely miss the Women's World Cup.

Dr. David Chao took a graft from a

tendon in MacMillan's right knee to replace the torn anterior cruciate ligament. He also repaired damage to MacMillan's medial collateral ligament and torn cartilage.

MacMillan, a forward on the U.S. national team, was hurt Sunday night playing for the San Diego Spirit of the WUSA.

ROME — Serginho scored two second-half goals as AC Milan beat AS Roma 4-1 in the first leg of the Italian Cup final despite resting most of its regulars.

The second leg of the total-goals series is scheduled for May 31 at Milan. AC Milan rested seven regulars ahead of the European Champions Cup final against Juventus on May 28.

Roma captain Francesco Totti, returning from a one-month injury layoff, beat goalkeeper Christian Abbiati on a curling 25-yard free kick in the 27th minute to put the home team ahead.

TENNIS

ATHENS, Ga. — Illinois captured the school's first national championship in tennis, and completed an undefeated season by beating Vanderbilt 4-3.

Chris Martin won the decisive No. 6 singles match over Lewis Smith when the chair umpire overruled an out call by Smith on match point, giving Martin a 6-4, 4-6, 6-4 victory.

From The Associated Press

Stone Temple Pilots singer busted

Stone Temple Pilots lead singer Scott Weiland was released on \$10,000 bail after police arrested him for investigation of drug possession in Burbank, Calif.

Officers pulled Weiland over early Sunday morning for driving without his lights on, said Burbank Police Sgt. Tracy Sanchez.

They reported noticing that Weiland had narcotics in the car and arrested him.

The 35-year-old singer was released later that day.

Michael Jackson travels for fast food

Reclusive pop star Michael Jackson, wearing a red-and-blue Spider-Man mask, popped into a congressman's field office in Solvang, Calif., seeking an answer to a critical issue.

"How come Solvang doesn't have any fast-food restaurants?" the costumed Jackson asked Steve Lavagnino, deputy director in the new office of Rep. Elton Gallegly, R-Santa Barbara.

According to Lavagnino, the discussion about two weeks ago went like this: After Jackson was told the only chain restaurant was a Subway sandwich shop, he said, "I love Taco Bell."

Solvang, about 140 miles north of Los Angeles, is a

Faces 'n' places

quaint village that bills itself as "the Danish Capital of America."

The 44-year-old singer then pulled off his disguise and apologized for disturbing Lavagnino, although Jackson didn't know what kind of office he'd wandered into.

"I've seen you on TV," said Lavagnino.

"Don't believe everything you see on TV," replied Jackson, who isn't registered to vote in Santa Barbara County.

Jackson later was seen at a Taco Bell/Pizza Hut drive-through window in nearby Buellton.

Lee touts higher education

Filmmaker Spike Lee extolled the virtues of a college education during a speech to the Black Expo in Columbia, S.C.

Lee also told black parents in the audience to steer their children toward real role models and away from rappers. He said violent images from rappers such as 50 Cent are damaging the next generation.

"Forget about the beat," he said Saturday. "Let's talk about the lyrical content."

Lee, a graduate of Morehouse College in Atlanta, said education was the path to success. He lamented that young black scholars sometimes are ridiculed as "fakes who are 'acting white.'"

"But if you're on a corner, holding a 40, smoking a blunt and holding your privates, then you're real."

The 46-year-old director of such films as "Do the Right Thing" and "Malcolm X" also urged his audience to boycott businesses that display the Confederate flag.

Jersey rockers needed

Bruce Springsteen and Jon Bon Jovi have performed at many benefit concerts over the years. Now the state of New Jersey has its hand out.

Two state lawmakers have come up with a proposal to solve New Jersey's arts funding crisis, and they want the two native rockers to help out.

Sen. Nia Gill and Assemblyman Neil Cohen want to create a New Jersey State Council on the Arts Donation Fund to make up for arts funding being cut from the state budget.

Lauren Schneider, a spokeswoman at Bon Jovi's record company, had no immediate comment Friday. Springsteen spokeswoman Marilyn Laverty could not be reached.

From wire reports

Nets 88, Pistons 86

AUBURN HILLS, Mich. — Kenyon Martin scored 16 points in the fourth quarter as New Jersey beat Detroit on Tuesday to take a 2-0 lead in the Eastern Conference finals.

Richard Jefferson's two free throws with 48 seconds remaining were the winning points, but the Pistons had two chances to tie or win. Corliss Williamson missed a short hook in the final 30 seconds, while Chauncey Billups couldn't put any mustard on a three-pointer at the buzzer with Jason Kidd in his face.

Martin finished with 25 points and

NBA playoffs

nine rebounds for the Nets, who rallied from an 11-point fourth quarter deficit. They came back from 10 down in the third quarter in Sunday's 76-74 victory in Game 1.

The series moves to New Jersey for Game 3 on Thursday. Only two teams in NBA history have won a best-of-seven series after losing the first two games at home.

The Nets have won eight straight playoff games, including five in a row on the road.

Richard Hamilton, an offensive spark

for the Pistons in the second half, led Detroit with 24 points, while Ben Wallace had seven points and 19 rebounds.

Kidd, who hit the winning shot in Game 1 with 1.4 seconds to go, had 20 points and seven assists for the Nets, while Jason Collins held his own against Wallace with 11 points and a career-high 14 rebounds.

The game included 14 ties and 16 lead changes and little sustained offense until Hamilton got going in the third quarter.

The Nets stayed in the game with a 19-7 edge in offensive rebounds for the game.

From The Associated Press

Red Sox 10, Yankees 7

BOSTON — Boston overcame Pedro Martinez's injury and ruined Jose Contreras' return to the majors with a five-run seventh inning and a 10-7 victory over New York on Tuesday.

Martinez was scratched from his start with a mild strain of a back muscle and is listed as day to day. Contreras, recalled earlier in the day after four minor league appearances, gave up all five runs in the seventh-inning rally.

The key hit was David Ortiz's two-run double that put Boston ahead to stay, 7-6, and sent New York to its seventh loss in nine games.

Alan Embree (3-1) pitched a perfect seventh for the victory, and Brandon Lyon struck out the side in the ninth for his sixth save.

The longtime rivals have split their first two meetings of the season the past two days, leaving them tied for first in the AL East. Yankees ace and former Red Sox star Roger Clemens goes for his 299th victory Wednesday night at Fenway Park.

Indians 6, Tigers 4

CLEVELAND — Rookie Brandon Phillips hit a three-run homer with one out in the ninth inning, rallying Cleveland past Detroit.

Phillips' line shot off Matt Roney (0-1) gave the Indians their most dramatic victory this season.

The Tigers, meanwhile, have lost six straight games and blew a late lead for the second straight game. On Monday night, Detroit squandered leads of 6-0 and 9-7.

This time, Detroit took a 4-3 lead into the ninth. Casey Blake blooped a one-out single and Ben Broussard sent him to third with a single before Phillips homered.

Rookie Josh Bard homered for the Indians, and David Riske (1-0) pitched an inning for the victory.

Rangers 5, Devil Rays 2

ARLINGTON, Texas — Alex Rodriguez hit a two-run homer and Joaquin Benoit pitched seven strong innings as Texas extended its winning streak to a

American League

season-high four games with a victory over Tampa Bay.

Hank Blalock went 3-for-4 with a home run and two RBIs for the Rangers, who opened a six-game homestand after a three-game sweep of the Yankees in New York last weekend. Blalock leads the majors with a .365 average.

Benoit (2-1) allowed two runs and four hits, struck out a career-high eight and walked two. Ugueth Urbina got three straight outs for his 13th save in 14 chances.

The Rangers broke the game open against rookie Dewon Brazelton (0-3) with four runs in the second inning.

White Sox 4, Blue Jays 1

CHICAGO — Bartolo Colon cooled off Toronto's bats and Chicago ended a four-game losing by beating the Blue Jays.

Colon (5-3) won his third straight start, allowing nine hits and getting a great catch from left fielder Carlos Lee to shut off a Blue Jays' potential rally in the fifth. Colon pitched his third complete game of the season and 22nd of his career, striking out six and walking two.

Toronto entered the game leading the majors in batting average, runs, hits, total bases and doubles. The Blue Jays had won four straight, scoring 41 runs.

Struggling offensively most of the season, Chicago scored four unearned runs, thanks to a pair of errors by first baseman Carlos Delgado.

Delgado's low throw led to two unearned runs in the third off Doug Davis (1-3).

Frank Thomas, in a 1-for-15 skid, doubled in a run in the seventh after Delgado allowed Valentin's grounder to go through his legs for another error.

Athletics 4, Twins 1

OAKLAND, Calif. — Tim Hudson allowed five hits in eight innings as Oakland beat Minnesota in a heated rematch of October's playoffs.

Benches cleared twice during the

game. The teams rushed the field in the fifth inning after Rick Reed (2-5) hit Ramon Hernandez with a pitch, and the benches cleared again in the sixth when Hudson hit Bobby Kielty.

No punches were thrown and nobody was ejected, but anger seems to remain from last season's playoffs, when Twins catcher A.J. Pierzynski angered the A's during Minnesota's clinching Game 5 victory at the Coliseum.

Hudson (4-1) won for just the second time since April 16. Keith Foulke got his 12th save in 14 chances.

Scott Hatteberg drove in two runs as Oakland improved the majors' best home record to 17-5.

Mariners 7, Royals 4

SEATTLE — Randy Winn hit a two-run homer, and Bret Boone and Mike Cameron doubled off the wall as Seattle scored four times in the eighth inning to beat Kansas City.

Winn and Cameron each hit the first pitch they saw from rookie reliever D.J. Carrasco (3-2), along with Edgar Martinez, who singled in Boone to break a 3-3 tie.

Jeff Nelson (3-0) pitched the eighth for the Mariners, who won their fifth straight and improved the best record in the American League to 29-15.

Raul Ibanez homered twice for the Royals.

Angels 7, Orioles 6

ANAHEIM, Calif. — Troy Glaus homered twice, and Scott Spiezio tripled and scored the winning run on short-stop Deivi Cruz's throwing error in the ninth inning as Anaheim rallied past Baltimore.

Brad Fullmer tied it with an RBI single off Baltimore closer Jorge Julio (0-3) after Glaus doubled leading off the ninth.

Fullmer was thrown out at second trying to stretch his hit into a double.

Tony Batista and Jay Gibbons homered, and Jeff Conine hit a pair of RBI doubles for the Orioles, who lost for the eighth time in nine games.

Garret Anderson had a two-run shot for the Angels. Scott Schoeneweis (1-0) pitched a perfect ninth.

From The Associated Press

Scores/standings

NBA playoffs

CONFERENCE FINALS (Best-of-seven) Tuesday

New Jersey 88, Detroit 86, New Jersey leads series 2-0

NHL playoffs

CONFERENCE FINALS (Best-of-seven) Monday

Ottawa 3, New Jersey 1, New Jersey leads series 3-2

Wednesday

Ottawa at New Jersey, 7 p.m.

American League

East Division				
	W	L	Pct	GB
Boston	28	17	.622	—
New York	28	17	.622	—
Toronto	23	23	.500	5½
Baltimore	19	25	.432	8½
Tampa Bay	18	26	.409	9½
Central Division				
	W	L	Pct	GB
Minnesota	25	19	.568	—
Kansas City	24	19	.558	½
Chicago	21	24	.467	4½
Cleveland	16	28	.364	9
Detroit	9	34	.209	15½
West Division				
	W	L	Pct	GB
Seattle	29	15	.659	—
Oakland	27	17	.614	2
Anaheim	22	21	.512	6½
Texas	20	24	.455	9

Tuesday's games

Boston 10, N.Y. Yankees 7
Cleveland 6, Detroit 4
Texas 5, Tampa Bay 2
Chicago White Sox 4, Toronto 1
Anaheim 7, Baltimore 6
Seattle 7, Kansas City 4
Oakland 4, Minnesota 1

National League

East Division				
	W	L	Pct	GB
Atlanta	31	14	.689	—
Montreal	28	17	.622	3
Philadelphia	26	19	.578	5
New York	19	26	.422	12
Florida	19	27	.413	12½
Central Division				
	W	L	Pct	GB
Chicago	25	19	.568	—
Houston	24	21	.533	1½
St. Louis	22	21	.512	2½
Cincinnati	23	22	.511	2½
Pittsburgh	18	26	.409	7
Milwaukee	17	29	.370	9
West Division				
	W	L	Pct	GB
San Francisco	28	17	.622	—
Los Angeles	25	20	.556	3
Colorado	21	24	.467	7
Arizona	21	25	.457	7½
San Diego	13	33	.283	15½

Tuesday's games

Montreal 6, Florida 4
Chicago Cubs at Pittsburgh, p.p.d., rain
Philadelphia 11, N.Y. Mets 7
Cincinnati 9, Atlanta 8
Milwaukee 8, San Diego 7
Houston 3, St. Louis 2
San Francisco 6, Arizona 5
Los Angeles 3, Colorado 1

From The Associated Press

Continued from Page 7

Greg Maddux gave up seven runs and nine hits in four innings.

Astros 3, Cardinals 2

HOUSTON — Wade Miller (2-5), whose only victory in nine previous starts this season was May 5, hit a two-run double and allowed three hits over seven innings to lead Houston over St. Louis.

Adam Everett drove in the go-ahead run in the sixth as St. Louis lost for the ninth time in 14 games. Houston moved past the Cardinals into sole possession of second place in the National League Central.

Billy Wagner allowed St. Louis to load the bases in the ninth, then retired pinch-hitter Edgar Renteria on a game-ending grounder for his 11th save, competing a four-hitter.

Garrett Stephenson (3-3) gave up three runs, six hits and four walks in six innings.

Brewers 8, Padres 7

MILWAUKEE — John Vander Wal homered in the ninth inning off Matt Herges (1-1), as Milwaukee beat San Diego to extend the Padres' losing streak to a season-high seven.

San Diego, which has lost 15 of 17, tied it on Sean Burroughs' two-out RBI triple in the ninth off closer Mike DeJean (2-3).

Wes Helms hit a three-run homer for the Brewers.

Rookie Xavier Nady homered and had a career-high four RBIs for San Diego (13-33).

National League continued

Giants 6, Diamondbacks 5

PHOENIX — Barry Bonds hit his 12th homer and Kirk Rueter (5-1) took a shut-out into the eighth inning as San Francisco beat Arizona.

Bonds also drew a bases-loaded walk, Rich Aurilia homered and Benito Santiago doubled in two runs for the Giants.

Rueter allowed three runs and eight hits in 7½ innings. After Junior Spivey made it a one-run game with a three-run homer off Joe Nathan, Tim Worrell pitched a perfect ninth for his 13th save.

Elmer Dessens (3-4) allowed five runs — four earned — and eight hits in 4½ innings.

Dodgers 3, Rockies 1

LOS ANGELES — Kevin Brown (5-1) allowed three hits in seven innings, giving up one earned run for his fifth straight start as Los Angeles beat Colorado.

Adrian Beltre hit a tiebreaking two-run single off Justin Speier in the seventh inning as the Dodgers extended their winning streak to a season-high five and sent Colorado to its 13th loss in 19 games.

Eric Gagne struck out the side for the second straight game, getting his 16th save and 24th in succession dating to last year.

Darren Oliver (1-3) gave up a tying double to Ron Coomer before Beltre's hit.

From The Associated Press